



Ciguatera fish poisoning and environmental change: A case for strengthening health surveillance in the Pacific?

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Abstract:

Ciguatera Fish Poisoning (CFP), a significant public health problem in the Pacific, is intrinsically linked to the health of coral reef ecosystems. Incidence data on CFP could therefore be used, in theory, as indicators of disruption to coral reefs. Some disruptions, such as increasing sea surface temperatures, result from global environmental change--therefore suggesting that CFP is likely to become an increasing public health problem in the region. The proactive management of increasing numbers of cases will depend on an understanding of the ecology of the disease, sound health surveillance systems to report cases of CFP including appropriate case definitions, and quantifiable correlations between case numbers and environmental variables. Here, we briefly review the knowledge about these components in Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs), including summarising regional variation in symptoms of CFP cases, investigating media as an enhanced surveillance tool, and summarising regional environmental drivers of CFP cases. We conclude that CFP could be an important indicator of the health of reef ecosystems in the face of global climate change and more novel approaches such as combining environmental and health data, need to be implemented to improve surveillance of CFP.

Resource Description

Early Warning System:

resource focus on systems used to warn populations of high temperatures, extreme weather, or other elements of climate change to prevent harm to health

A focus of content

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Food/Water Quality

Food/Water Quality: Biotoxin/Algal Bloom

Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

Ocean/Coastal

Geographic Location:

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal



resource focuses on specific location

Non-United States

Non-United States: Australasia

Health Co-Benefit/Co-Harm (Adaption/Mitigation):

specification of beneficial or harmful impacts to health resulting from efforts to reduce or cope with greenhouse gases

A focus of content

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Infectious Disease

Infectious Disease: Foodborne/Waterborne Disease

Foodborne/Waterborne Disease: Marine Toxin Syndrome

Intervention:

strategy to prepare for or reduce the impact of climate change on health

A focus of content

Medical Community Engagement:

resource focus on how the medical community discusses or acts to address health impacts of climate change

A focus of content

Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Review

Timescale:

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified